

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 443
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dr. Thomas Frist, Sr.
and Mrs. Dorothy Harrison Cate Frist.

WHEREAS, it was with great sadness and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly learned of the death of two of the greatest philanthropists and finest human beings this state has ever known, Dr. Thomas Frist, Sr. and Mrs. Dorothy Harrison Cate Frist; and

WHEREAS, during their sixty-one years of marital bliss, Dr. and Mrs. Frist not only shared a very special relationship as husband and wife, but were also true and equal partners in every aspect of life; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being a nationally recognized cardiologist and an exemplary physician, Dr. Frist was the co-founder, chief medical officer, former chairman of the board and conscience of Hospital Corporation of America; and

WHEREAS, in these roles, he was instrumental in developing Nashville into the nation's health care capital with its 18 publicly traded health care companies and more than 100 private ones; and

WHEREAS, first and foremost, Dr. Frist was a family man, friend and physician, who was loved and admired by all who were fortunate to know him; and

WHEREAS, friends and colleagues described him as "a caring, loving human being who saw value and worth in every person he met, regardless of their position in life"; and

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WHEREAS, a kind and compassionate physician, Dr. Frist always counted the needs and concerns of his patients to be of primary importance, often spending hours comforting frightened heart patients; and

WHEREAS, despite his prominence in his profession and his community at large, Dr. Frist was a good listener who always took time to praise others for their accomplishments and exemplary job performance; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Frist was a self-deprecating man who enthusiastically asked about others and left them feeling good about themselves; “Good people beget good people” was his philosophy; and

WHEREAS, he was widely revered by his employees and patients and universally respected by his colleagues, both for his proficiency in the healing arts and his business acumen; and

WHEREAS, although he was competitive, Dr. Frist was truly a gracious and generous gentleman; and

WHEREAS, a native of Mississippi, Dr. Frist worked his way through the University of Mississippi as an undergraduate by means of an assortment of jobs; and

WHEREAS, he first came to Nashville to attend Vanderbilt University Medical School; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Frist’s first medical practice was with his brother-in-law, William Cate; he later shared a practice with diabetes specialist, Addison Scoville; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Frist later became interested in the design of medical institutions, firmly believing that hospitals should be both aesthetically pleasing and user friendly; Centennial Medical Center and Summit Medical Center were built on this concept and are his brick-and-mortar legacies; and

WHEREAS, still, Dr. Frist asserted that it was not bricks and mortar that make a hospital, but rather compassionate and dedicated physicians and employees; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Dr. Frist and some fellow doctors founded Park Vista Convalescent Hospital and Nursing Home (later Park View); this was the genesis for Hospital Corporation of America; and

WHEREAS, in alliance with his friend, Jack Massey and his son, Dr. Thomas Frist, Jr., Dr. Frist co-founded Hospital Corporation of America, which after its merger with Columbia, became the nation's largest health care services provider; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Frist and Mr. Massey also collaborated in 1978 to start American Retirement Corp., an assisted-living company dear to Dr. Frist's heart because of his longtime interest in aging; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Frist was a visionary who profoundly changed the practice of medicine; he was a giant in his field and a meritorious example for all physicians; and

WHEREAS, in the civic arena, his legacy will live on for generations to come in the countless worthwhile projects he supported to ensure the growth and improvement of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, although he worked long hours and seven days a week, Dr. Frist was always the inspiration and foundation for his family; and

WHEREAS, Dorothy Harrison Cate Frist was a champion for her husband and children throughout her life, and she was truly the glue that held her family together; and

WHEREAS, her constant encouragement and support and her sprightly demeanor will be sorely missed not only by her family, but also by all those who were fortunate to know and love her; and

WHEREAS, a native of Hopkinsville, Kentucky, Mrs. Frist was one of fourteen children, all of whom graduated from college; and

WHEREAS, during her childhood, Mrs. Frist's family moved to East Nashville, where they were lovingly raised by their widowed mother; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Frist was a graduate of Ward-Belmont and Peabody College; she actively participated in the literary affairs and publications at both schools and was well known for her literary skills as a member of the Centennial Club; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Frist was famous for her great ability as a storyteller, and the family's home was a popular gathering place for sports and games during her children's early years; and

WHEREAS, a warm and generous person, Mrs. Frist befriended many of her husband's patients; she became so familiar with their conditions that she could almost diagnose and prescribe for their maladies when Dr. Frist was out; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Frist's patients truly loved her because, more than anything, she was a good listener, a talent she shared with her beloved husband; and

WHEREAS, although her primary responsibilities and interests were related to home and family, Mrs. Frist was also very astute about business and commerce and was a valuable advisor to her husband on such matters; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Frist firmly believed that good citizenship entailed many responsibilities, as well as privileges, and she devoted a large portion of her life to ensuring the continued health and prosperity of her community and her fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, because this remarkable lady was "concerned about the soul as well as the body," she was a faithful supporter of the Nashville Union Rescue Mission; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, a new addition to Harpeth Hall School was named in Mrs. Frist's honor in recognition of her deeply held belief in the importance of education and family and her abiding affection for young people; and

WHEREAS, Dorothy Cate Frist passed away mere hours after her husband's death; and

WHEREAS, just as they were inseparable during life, Dr. and Mrs. Frist were laid to rest together in combined funeral and burial services; and

WHEREAS, Dr. and Mrs. Frist are survived by their three sons: Dr. Thomas Frist, Jr., Dr. Frist's business partner and confidant for over 30 years; Dr. Robert Frist, a heart surgeon and

heart-lung transplant surgeon; and U.S. Senator William Frist, a former heart-lung transplant surgeon at Vanderbilt before his election to the U.S. Senate; two daughters, Dorothy Frist Boensch and Mary Barfield; fourteen grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Frist is also survived by four sisters: Martha Cate Middendorf of Bethpage; Frances Cate Grigsby of Nashville; Margaret "Bonnie" Cate of Nashville; and Mary Lou Cate Clark of Williamsburg, Virginia; and a brother, Wilbur Cate of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, people of Dr. and Mrs. Frist's stature do not often walk among us, and we should pause to pay homage to the memory of this distinguished couple who were devoted parents and compassionate human beings; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor the memory of Dr. Thomas Frist, Sr., and Mrs. Dorothy Harrison Cate Frist reflecting fondly on their indelible legacy of purposeful action and stalwart commitment to his patients and their family and their great humanity and dedication as servants of their fellow human beings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy and condolences to Dr. and Mrs. Frist's family and many friends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.